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Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIBREV 00678 201531Z
ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 INR-10 EB-08 SS-15 NSC-05
/054 W
----------061983 201541Z /72
P R 201400Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 752
INFO AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PRIORITY
USDAO/KINSHASA PRIORITY
SECDEF WASHDC
JCS WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
DMA HQ WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 0678

YAOUNDE FOR AMBASSADOR TIENKEN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAIR, GB US
SUBJ: REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO LOCATE DOWNED HELICOPTER

REF: (A) STATE 055040 DTG 031944Z MAR 78 (B) LIBREVILLE
589 DTG 071611Z MAR 78 (NOTAL) (C) LIBREVILLE 441
DTG 211212Z FEB 78 (NOTAL) (D) STATE 045039 DTG
220133Z FEB 78 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING MEETING ON ANOTHER SUBJECT MARCH 18, ACTING
FOREIGN MINISTER NGOMO-OBIANG STATED THAT PRIMARY REASON HE
WANTED TO MEET WITH ME WAS TO TRANSMIT PRESIDENT BONGO'S
RENEWED REQUEST FOR SATELLITE COVERAGE TO HELP LOCATE
DOWNED HELICOPTER. NGOMO-OBIANG STATED THAT HE HAD JUST
RETURNED FROM PRESIDENT'S OFFICE WHICH PERMEATED BY ATMOSPHERE
OF INCREASING FRUSTRATION OVER INABILITY LOCATE HELICOPTER.
THE PRESIDENT, WHO WAS FULLY AWARE OF OUR RESPONSE TO HIS
INITIAL REQUEST (REFTEL D), WISHED TO INQUIRE ABOUT POSSIBILITY
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SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHIC OR OTHER COVERAGE OF THE AREA.
I QUESTIONED WHETHER SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHS OF JUNGLE
AREA AT THIS STAGE, EVEN IF FEASIBLE, WOULD BE USEFUL.
EXPLAINING THAT I HAD NEITHER INSTRUCTION NOR EXPERTISE IN THIS
AREA, IT MY PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING ONLY HOPE OF LOCATING
HELICOPTER FROM SATELLITE WOULD HAVE BEEN IF: (A) SATELLITE
HAD BEEN IN A POSITION TO COVER AREA DURING FIRST 24 HOURS

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AFTER CRASH (B) WAS EQUIPPED WITH AND HAD ENGAGED PROPER EQUIPMENT (C) THERE HAD BEEN HEAT GENERATED. NGOMO-OBIANG SEEMED UNDERSTANDING.

2. AT 10:00 THIS MORNING I RECEIVED TELEPHONE CALL THAT ACTING MINISTER "WAITING TO SEE ME URGENTLY." WHEN I ARRIVED, NGOMO-OBIANG TOLD ME HE HAD RELAYED SUB-STANCE OUR SATURDAY CONVERSATION TO PRESIDENT BONGO BUT THAT THE PRESIDENT INSTRUCTED HIM TO GET IN TOUCH WITH ME AND REPEAT THE REQUEST. BONGO DESIRED COVERAGE NOT ONLY OF AREA ORIGINALLY CONSIDERED TO BE PRIMARY IMPACT ZONE BUT ALSO NORTHWARD TO AND INTO EQUATORIAL GUINEA. THE GABONESE, HE SAID, HAVE INDICATIONS THAT THE HELICOPTER MAY HAVE STRAYED OVER THE BORDER. NGOMO-OBIANG STATED THAT EVEN IF US SATELLITE COULD PROVIDE NO USEFUL DATA, THE FACT THAT WE TRIED WOULD BE OF IMMENSE IMPORTANCE TO PRESIDENT BONGO, WHO ALREADY WAS APPRECIATIVE OF OUR EARLIER EFFORTS.

3. I DO NOT KNOW, GIVEN SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS, HOW MUCH WE CAN TELL GABONESE ABOUT OUR SATELLITE CAPABILITIES. IT IS LIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT EITHER I OR AMBASSADOR WILL MEET WITH BONGO FOR NAMIBIA CONTACT GROUP BRIEFING LATER THIS WEEK OR EARLY NEXT WEEK WHERE HE MAY WELL RAISE QUESTION DIRECTLY. WE NEED TO BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE HIM SOME KIND OF CONFIDENTIAL

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RESPONSE.THE MINIMUM WOULD BE AT LEAST TO REPLY AFFIRMATIVELY TO GABONESE REQUEST FOR MAPS OF AREA TRANS-MITTED REFTEL B. IF THERE WERE ANY CAPABILITY OF PHOTOGRAPHING SOME OR ALL OF AREA WITH DATT OR OTHER AIRCRAFT, THAT WOULD BE EVEN BETTER.YATES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HELICOPTERS, AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780348/aaaaboem.tel
Line Count: 99
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Message ID: 3c4cf2c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
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Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3270338
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO LOCATE DOWNED HELICOPTER
TAGS: EAIR, GB, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3c4cf2c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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